



# CITY OF ANNISTON, ALABAMA

## MAYOR

Jack Draper

## CITY COUNCIL

Jay Jenkins - Ward 1

D.D. Roberts - Ward 2

Ciara Smith - Ward 3

Millie Harris - Ward 4

## CITY MANAGER

Steven Folks

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## **ANNISTON CLOSES DEAL ON FINAL LADIGA TRAIL PROPERTY**

**ANNISTON, AL** -- In December of 2021, the Anniston City Council unanimously approved the acquisition of the final 1.4 miles of the Chief Ladiga Trail from Norfolk Southern Railway. City leadership is now proud to announce that on February 1, 2022, the closing of this final piece of the trail was completed; thereby, giving the City of Anniston ownership over all of the land necessary for the Chief Ladiga Trail.

*“This is a tremendous deal and opportunity for the City of Anniston, and our whole region. Cycling is such an important component of our ecotourism here and it’s been a long time coming but I am so excited about this. This is a big deal for us — we should all be excited about this,”* stated Anniston Mayor Jack Draper.

*“This is a dream over 30 years in the making, and this achievement should not be taken lightly,”* said City Manager Steven Folks. For background, the Ladiga Trail traces its beginnings back to 1996; wherein the initial 8.9 miles of trail was first opened in Piedmont, Alabama. In 1999, the City of Anniston finished its first section of the trail that now leads to Mike Tucker Park. Once the trail is fully constructed, it will connect to Georgia’s Silver Comet Trail that stretches an additional 62 miles. **The combined Chief Ladiga/Silver Comet Trail will be one of the longest paved pedestrian paths in the entire United States of America.**

*“We can finally get to work on the dream,”* said City Economic Development Director Toby Bennington. *“With ownership of all the necessary properties, city leadership may now move into the engineering and design phases of the trail. After the design, engineering, and surveying is complete, we will be able to give a time table on when citizens should expect the trail to be fully realized.”*

A 2021 study performed by Jacksonville State University’s (JSU) Center for Business and Economic Research found how the trail’s construction alone will result in: 35 new jobs, \$1,448,309 in Labor Income for workers, \$1,958,396 added to our region’s gross state product (GSP), and a total \$4,500,000 of economic output for the City of Anniston, Alabama.

